

**REMARKS**

By the present Preliminary Amendment, Claims 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9 have been amended to eliminate multiple dependency. Entry of the instant Preliminary Amendment and favorable consideration on the merits are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the subject application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: December 16, 2003

By: *Wendi L. Weinstein*, Reg. No. 34,456  
for: Platon N. Mandros  
Registration No. 22,124

P.O. Box 1404  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404  
(703) 836-6620